Membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

4582. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of Kazakhstan has advocated for India's membership on the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation;

(b) whether India has sought the membership of this organisation;

(c) by when a decision on this is likely to be taken;

(d) which other countries are its members; and

(e) what are objectives of this organization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) No Sir; The membership charter of SCO has yet to be formulated.

(d) China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;

(e) The objectives of Shanghai Cooperation Organization are:—

Regional security and stability, combating terrorism and to set up a Regional Anti-terrorism mechanism besides undertaking political, economic and cultural cooperation.

Depicting J and K and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed areas by Microsoft

4583. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that, in Map Point, 2002, which is an elaborate detailed software, prepared by the Microsoft showed Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Whether any protest has been launched either through diplomatic or other channels before the US Government in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Map Point, 2002, a software released by the Microsoft corporation, shows Jammu and Kashmir as well as Arunachal Pradesh as disputed.

(c) and (d) The matter was taken up by the Consultate General of India, San Francisco with the senior officials of the Microsoft corporation. They subsequently clarified that the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh is no longer being shown as disputed in Map Point's maps. This label was removed from their map data in the late February of this year after the issue was brought to their attention. However, this change will not be visible until the next release of the Map point's product. As regards J & K map, the Microsoft conveyed to the Consulate General of India, San Francisco that they would be removing the term 'disputed' from all the map labels in the Jammu and Kashmir region to align the maps with the UN depiction of the region, by the fourth quarter of the calendar year 2002.

Reaction on Gujarat Incidence

†4584. SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the type of reactions Government have received from Central Asia and Gulf countries on the recent incidents of Godhra and Gujarat; and

(b) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Sir, there have been no official comments/reactions received from Central Asian as well as Gulf countries.

(b) Not Applicable.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.